

U.S. Military Academy - Officer's Quarters No. 32
(Family Housing)
West side of Thayer Road, north of Buffalo Soldier Field
U.S. Military Academy
West Point
Orange County
New York

HABS No. NY-5708-32

HABS

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY - OFFICER'S QUARTERS NO. 32
(FAMILY HOUSING)

LOCATION: West side of Thayer Road, north of Buffalo Soldier Field, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, Orange County, New York.

USGS West Point Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.586970.4581300.

PRESENT OWNER AND OCCUPANT: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.

PRESENT USE: Family Housing - Colonel.

SIGNIFICANCE: Quarters No. 32 is an example of the highly successful officers' quarters designed for the U.S. Military Academy by the office of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. Its character, neo gothic, reflects the general theme of their work at the Academy with exceptional American Arts and Crafts interiors.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1905 - 1910.
2. Architect: Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects, Boston and New York.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.
4. Builder: Broderick & Wind Engineering and Construction Company. The construction was completed by the U.S. Fidelity and Guaranty Company, a bonding company, after a default and a delay. The bonding company contract is dated September 20, 1906. The Mitchell Vance Company supplied the original light fixtures (Annual Report, 1908).
5. Original plan and construction: Quarters No. 32 was part of a group consisting of Quarters Nos. 21, 25, 34, 42, 45, and 48. The total cost of these quarters was \$270,292.70.
6. Alterations and additions: There have been no major alterations or additions.

- B. Historical Context: Quarters No. 32 was one of many sets of quarters designed by Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson as part of the early twentieth century expansion at the Academy. These particular quarters were intended for Captains and Lieutenants and were approved in 1904.

For the historical and architectural context of this building within the overall development of West Point, see HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 2: "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy".

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Quarters No. 32 is representative of the work of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson at the U.S. Military Academy in the first decade of the twentieth century. The brick exterior walls, with limestone detailing and painted wood trim, were designed to create a Tudor Gothic appearance that would be distinctive on a campus that, at that time, was composed of a wide variety of styles. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson were, without doubt, the most prominent architectural firm at West Point in this century. Their major building campaign at the Academy is a clear reflection of the "medievalist" craftsman philosophy of Ralph Adams Cram. This is seen not only in their other buildings at West Point, but also in their work nationally.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Quarters No. 32 is a "U" shaped building with a shallow projection in the center of the rear (west) elevation and two two-story bay window projections on the front. The overall length is 110'-10" and the overall width, from the rear projection to the outside of the arms of the "U", is 42'-0". The large cross gable ends at the north and south ends of the building, and the two narrower cross gables above the bay windows help create a sense of verticality appropriate to a "gothic" design. The system of ten vertical bay window units along the front facade helps disguise the rigid symmetry applied to the design, while the elevation of the building on a terrace created by a 15' retaining wall heightens the impressiveness of the building's exterior. Quarters No. 32 has four bays on the north and south elevations.
2. Foundations: Concrete was used for the footings, while the foundation walls are stone below grade and brick above.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of Quarters No. 32 are red brick laid in a Flemish bond with brick, limestone and bluestone detailing.

Limestone is used for the sills of the windows, while splayed brick lintels complete the window detailing, except for the bay windows. Additionally, limestone is used as a trim material on the "buttress" elements in the verandas, and as the cap to the

pointed parapet over the entry. Bluestone is used for the chimney caps, the end parapets on the cross gables, the capping for the veranda buttresses, for the chimney trim, and for the exterior stair treads leading to the front entries and to the verandas.

The only exterior wall embellishment is a brick pointed arch over the veranda openings.

4. Structural systems, framing: The walls are load-bearing brick faced with brick on the exterior and non-load-bearing wood stud partition walls covered with plaster and/or wood paneling on the interior. Floors are supported by wood joists, and the roofing system is composed of wood rafters. Steel beams are used where unusual loading conditions exist, primarily, to transfer loads to the exterior walls.
5. Porches, verandas, buttresses, chimneys: Two rectangular verandas, 11'-0" x 33'-3", are located at the north and south ends of the building. Each is 1 x 3 bays and is incorporated into the wide roof sweep of the main cross gable, forcing the viewer's eye out and away from the main structure. Brick "buttress" elements frame the veranda openings and add to the medieval character of the building. The verandas have recently been converted to screen porches through the addition of aluminum screens. The floors are of concrete, and the ceilings are 1" x 3" beaded wood tongue-and-groove paneling.

The rear porches corresponding to the two rear entries are made up of heavy chamfered posts and solid wood brackets supporting a shallow hip roof with a tin covering. The wood floor is raised on a brick foundation with square handrail and balusters completing the detailing.

There are four brick chimneys: two located near the center along the gable ridge, and two in the end walls of the main gable peak. Each chimney is stepped back at the ends, and has segmentally arched recessed panels on its long side. There are three panels for the center chimneys and one panel for the end chimneys.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: There are six doorways: two main entries in the two major cross gable units; two rear entries just to the outside of the rear projection; and two French doors, one leading in from each veranda.

The main entry doors, with a segmentally arched top, are of oak and measure 3'-7" x 7'-8" x 2 1/2". They have three vertical panels below with three leaded quarrel lights above which curve to follow the doorway arch. A segmental brick arch caps the doorway.

The French doors, 1'-6 1/2" x 7'-10" x 2 1/2", have two wood panels below with three square glass panels above.

The oak rear doors have three wood panels below with three leaded quarrel light openings above.

- b. Windows: The vertically arranged windows on the facade are one-over-one double-hung wood sash on the first and second levels. Exceptions include a leaded quarrel light casement window over the veranda opening. The windows on the third floor of the facade are leaded quarrel light double-hung wood sash, while the basement windows are pivoting three-light wood casement windows.

The north and south elevations have only two leaded quarrel light double-hung wood sash windows on the third level flanking the chimney.

The rear windows are more horizontally arranged, and are one-over-one double-hung wood sash with the exception of leaded quarrel light windows in the north corresponding to the interior stairway and leaded quarrel light casement windows above the verandas.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof is covered with multi-colored slate placed in a random pattern.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The eaves are made of wood. A narrow brick cornice is created by two projecting brick courses below the connection of roof and walls.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: Quarters No. 32 is a duplex with two identical units arranged symmetrically about an east-west party wall. Quarters No. 32B was surveyed for the purposes of this report. In this unit, Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson created a residence that has four rooms flanking a central hall/stairway on the first and second floors. A parlor, dining room, library and kitchen are on the first floor and four bedrooms and two bathrooms are on the second floor. The third level has three bedrooms, a bath and a trunk room arranged along an "L" shaped hall.

There is a strong flow of open space on the first level. Five foot wide openings lead from the main hall to the parlor and dining room, while an eight foot wide passageway exists between the parlor and the library. A 2'-10" doorway leads from the main hall to the rear hall which, in turn, services the kitchen. Access to the kitchen also exists through a swinging door connecting to the dining room.

The second and third levels, with smaller, well separated doorways, are much more private in plan.

2. Stairways: Two stairways service Quarters No. 32B. The main stairway connects the first and second levels only. It is a "U" return type stair situated in a 9'-8" x 12'-0" space with a chamfered oak newel post, machined handrail, square and cut out balusters and oak risers and treads. It is "separated" from the main hall by the use of heavy oak piers with oak brackets supporting an oak beam above. The rear stairway, an "L" type running from the basement to the third level, is situated in a 3'-6" space, and has plain wood posts, square balusters, rectangular handrail and wood risers and treads.
3. Flooring: Flooring is oak on the first floor, heart pine on the second and third floor and concrete and wood in the basement.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: There is a great variety of wall finishes on the first floor. The entry vestibule has a 7' wainscoting with 1" x 4" oak boards running vertically every 2' on the center. The hall has a 7' wainscoting with a 1" x 4" oak "railing" running horizontally at 5'. The living room has a 7' wainscoting, while the dining room has oak paneling to 7'. Wallpaper has been put over the plaster in all rooms. The ceiling in the entry hall has exposed 6" x 8" "beams" every 3' on center. The kitchen has been remodeled.

The walls on the second and third floors have wallpaper covering, while the basement has plaster, brick and stone walls painted white.

Ceilings are plaster throughout.

5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Quarters No. 32B typically has four-panel wood doors measuring 2'-10" x 7'-0" x 1 3/4". Plain wood trim is used on the first floor, while beaded wood trim is used on the second, third and basement levels.
6. Built-in features and hardware: A substantial amount of built-in features remain in Quarters No. 32B. An oak window seat in the main hall, and an unusual 1/2 bath with original features off the main hall, are on the first floor. A cut "tooth" pattern exists in the wood over the brick facing to the fireplace in the library. Perhaps, the most outstanding features, however, are what appear to be original light fixtures outside the main entry in the entry vestibule. The exterior lamps are of copper and are inverted, truncated cones in shape. The metal vestibule light, still with its gas "stopper", is round with straps and frosted glass.

7. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Heating: Steam radiators provide heat for the building.
- b. Lighting: Except for florescent lighting in the kitchen, incandescent lighting is used throughout.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: Quarters No. 32 is located just north of the intersection of Thayer Road and Swift Road. Fronting on Thayer Road, the building is oriented east toward the Hudson River. A terrace to the front, created by a 15' granite retaining wall, elevates the building above Thayer Road. The heavily wooded land drops off sharply to the east of Thayer Road to the Hudson River. To the north, up a slight rise, is Quarters No. 31. To the west, across the service road, the land slopes gently upward, and is covered with a mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees. A frame, shiplap covered, two car garage is also sited to the west. The site slopes gently downward to the south to Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson Quarters #34 (Habs No. NY-5708-33).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: Original ink-on-linen working drawings are in the Facilities Engineer's Office, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, U.S. Military Academy. Subsequent alteration drawings are also found there.
- B. Early Views: Early photographs can be found in the U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. Some of these are reproduced in the Grashof and Lange's volumes of this project.
- C. Bibliography:
 - 1. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

Records, U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. See bibliographic essay in the Lange volume of this project for a listing of record groups.
 - 2. Secondary and Published Sources:

Annual Reports, U.S. Military Academy Archives

Grashof, Bethanie C. - "Building Analysis and Preservation Guidelines for Category I and Selected Category II Buildings at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York", Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. (HABS No. NY-5708)

Lange, Robie S. - "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy", Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983 (HABS No. NY-5708).

- D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: The Records of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is part of a multi-year project sponsored by the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy, explained in the United States Military Academy, HABS No. NY 5708, Volume 1, "Methodology". This written documentation was prepared by Travis C. McDonald, Jr. and Timothy Lindblad, architectural historians, in 1982-1985 based on fieldwork conducted in 1982 and 1984.

ADDENDUM TO
U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY,
OFFICER'S QUARTERS
(U.S.M.A., Family Housing)
West Side of Thayer Road,
North of Mills Road
U.S. Military Academy
West Point
Orange County
New York

HABS No. NY-5709-32

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